

Recycled Latex Paint

Introduction

As with any painting project, latex paint is often purchased in greater quantities than needed. Rather than dispose of the leftover paint, it can be reused or reprocessed to make a high-quality, economical, recycled paint for use in place of standard latex paint.

This fact sheet is an overview of reusable and recycled latex paint available in California. Its purpose is to promote recycled latex paint by familiarizing potential buyers with the product.

Why Use Recycled Paint?

Lower Cost. Recycled paint is often sold at lower prices than virgin paint of comparable quality.

Product Choices. What was once a one-color, limited-use product is now available in numerous grades, colors, and percentages of postconsumer content. Recycled latex paint can now meet a wide variety of specifications and can contain additives such as anti-mildew fungicides and color pigments that can be matched between batches. It is also available for metal surfaces and as primer. It can be sprayed, rolled, or brushed on, just as any other paint.

Disposal Problem. The average household stockpiles 1 to 3 gallons of waste paint per year, according to several studies. In California, unless latex paint is reused or recycled, it is considered a hazardous waste and must be disposed of in a Class I hazardous waste landfill.

Management of leftover paint, such as disposal and household hazardous waste (HHW) collection, is discussed in another fact sheet, *Latex Paint: Hazards and Solution for Disposal*.

Save on Disposal. Landfilling is an unnecessary expense because leftover paint, in most cases, is still a usable product. Purchasing recycled paint creates a market demand that helps build a convenient collection infrastructure.

Definitions

Recyclable. “Recyclable paint” is leftover usable latex paint that a customer delivers to a HHW or paint collection event, or directly to a paint manufacturer.

Consolidated or Reusable. “Consolidated” or “reusable paint” is paint collected and made available to consumers without modification of paint properties by a paint manufacturer.

Recycled. “Recycled paint” is recyclable paint that has been reprocessed by a paint manufacturer to meet specific performance specifications, as described below.

Reprocessing

“Recycled paint” is reprocessed or “remanufactured” by steps that usually include the following:

Filtering. Most paint as collected contains a small amount of filterable solids, so the paint must be filtered if it is to be applied by spraying.

Mixing with standard paint. Though some recycled paint is 100 percent recycled, most recycled paint is mixed with standard paint. The added new paint is usually white, which adds coloring flexibility. Most recycled latex paint is at least 50 percent recycled content; however, it is available in a wide range of other percentages as well.

Adding pigments. Pigments are added as needed to achieve particular shades.

Adjusting pH. New latex paint has a pH between 7.5 and 9.5. Paint tends to lower in pH during storage. Adding amines or ammonia can restore the pH.

Recycled Paint Study

A three-year study was conducted by California Polytechnic State University to evaluate recyclable and recycled latex paint. The study was done in conjunction with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB). (See ordering information under “Publications” on the next page.)

The study found that “a high quality recycled paint may be obtained by blending with virgin materials and by making adjustments in some of the paint properties—principally the viscosity and pH.”

State Purchasing Law

The Public Contract Code section 12170 required State agencies to purchase recycled paint containing at least 50 percent postconsumer paint. To find out more information please visit:

www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Statutes/PubContr.htm. Scroll to Article 2.1 and select the link for Section 12170.

State Purchasing Contract

The Department of General Services has awarded a statewide contract for purchasing of recycled latex paint by any local government body or corporation empowered to expend public funds and State agencies. To find out more information please visit: <http://pdrox.pd.dgs.ca.gov/pin/html/1-00-80-10.htm>

Sources of Recycled Paint

- **Dunn-Edwards Corporation**
www.dunnedwards.com
1-800-566-2396
- **Cal Western Paints**
(562) 693-0872
- **Contract Coatings Corp.**
(209) 465-2634
- **EcoPaint**
(562) 426-9091
- **Kelly-Moore**
www.kellymoore.com
(916) 921-0165
- **Pacific Resource Recovery**
www.pacificresource.com
1-800-499-7145
- **San Luis Paints**
www.wallwikcompany.com
(805) 543-1206

- **Stiles Paint Manufacturing**
(510) 887-8868
- **Visions Recycling**
www.visionsrecycling.com
1-800-770-7664
(916) 564-9121

For the latest information on recycled-content products (RCP), please visit the RCP database at: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP

To search for latex paint recycling centers please visit the following web page:
www.ciwmb.ca.gov/ConDemo/Products/

Sources of Consolidated Paint

The following vendors sell consolidated latex paint.

- **Early American Paint & Varnish Co.**
South San Francisco, CA (415) 583-9055
- **Habitat for Humanity:** Tijuana-San Diego
Lemon Grove, CA (619) 465-7576
- **Project: Team Work**
Walnut Creek, CA (510) 935-0829

Publications

CIWMB has two paint-related publications:

Sampling, Testing, and Evaluation of Recyclable and Recycled Latex Paint: Final Report. 125 pp., December 1995, (Pub #331-95-011).

Latex Paint: Hazards and Solutions to Disposal. Two-page overview of reduction, reuse, recycling, and disposal of leftover latex paint (also available in Spanish). (Pub. #331-97-016).

You may order these publications in two ways:

1. **Internet:** Visit our Web site at: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Publications/
(Look under “Household Hazardous Waste”).
2. **Phone:** CIWMB Publications Clearinghouse, 1-800-CA-WASTE (California only) or call (916) 341-6306.

CIWMB Contact

For a list of C&D staff and their contact information visit our Web site at:

www.ciwmb.ca.gov/ConDemo/Contacs.htm

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.